



# HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

## 17<sup>th</sup> District News

Winter 2010

### **Representative Tim Probst**

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#### **Committees:**

- Education Appropriations,  
*Vice Chair*
- Community & Economic  
Development & Trade
- Education
- Joint Committee on  
Economic Development  
& International  
Relations

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**1-800-562-6000**

**TDD (for hearing-impaired):**  
**1-800-635-9993**



Dear Friends:

Our 60-day session this winter is covering issues including jobs, the budget, education, the economy, and many other topics. I'm very grateful to be here representing our community.

I look forward to working with you on any state issues that may affect your personal or professional life. I am regularly reaching out to neighborhood groups, schools, and businesses because I want to serve you in the best way possible. You're my boss, and I work for you.

Please know that your calls, letters, e-mails and conversations make a tremendous difference in my daily work. Your direction helps me ask the right questions and find the right answers. I hope you will keep in regular contact with me, and encourage you to stay connected with your elected officials at every level of government.

I received outstanding feedback at my January 7<sup>th</sup> Town Hall meeting at the Creekside Estates Neighborhood Clubhouse in Orchards. I will be holding a telephone Town Hall meeting on Monday night, March 1. I hope that you will join the call, and I look forward to hearing from you then.

To keep in contact, please consider subscribing to my ongoing E-memo at this web site: [http://apps.leg.wa.gov/  
subscriptions/member.aspx?chamber=h&member=probst](http://apps.leg.wa.gov/subscriptions/member.aspx?chamber=h&member=probst).

All the best,

Tim Probst  
State Representative  
17th Legislative District

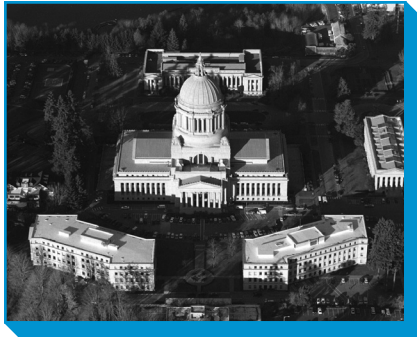
# Representative Tim Probst

## *Olympia 2009:*

### **It was great to win a couple victories in last year's Legislature**

**As a rookie lawmaker, I was able to pass some of the top priorities that you sent me to Olympia to accomplish: jobs, fixing schools, and supporting our military. I think we made some solid, commonsense progress through three pieces of legislation.**

One of my bills that made it to the governor's desk and on to state law was House Bill 1355, which sets up Opportunity Internships for high-school students. This allows students to earn a scholarship for college or an apprenticeship by completing an internship with a local employer. I'll talk a little more about this measure later in today's newsletter.



Another successful proposal, House Bill 2227, establishes the Evergreen Jobs Initiative to create at least 15,000 new jobs by the year 2020. It targets 30 percent of these jobs to veterans, National Guard members, and people who struggle with barriers to employment. It also accelerates work to win competitive federal funding for green economy projects locally and statewide and has generated \$38 million in federal grant applications so far.

Also last year, I won support for a key amendment to House Bill 1906. This amendment expands eligibility for training benefits to returning members of our National Guard. Some of our National Guard soldiers are unemployed in between deployments overseas. We need to do everything we can to support them and provide job training or college access to any of our Guard members who need it.



Finally, I am proud to have led a true community effort to secure funding to build a new engineering building at the WSU Vancouver campus. This was an uphill battle throughout the entire legislative session, but every time I asked community

members to make calls to help us win, you came through! This team effort led to WSU Vancouver winning the only state-bond funded building in the entire WSU system last year. Thank you to everyone who helped bring home this big win for our community and our economy!

## **Resources:**

### **Helping hands for citizens and families**

**No one knows it better than citizens and businesses in Southwest Washington: We're living through the worst recession in more than seven decades. The Clark County unemployment rate is approaching 14 percent, and everybody I know has a family member or friend who's recently lost their job or home.**

Folks in jeopardy of losing their homes are encouraged to contact the Washington State Department of Financial Institutions. People can get connected with resources to help them do what it takes to keep their family's roof over their heads. Call the department for more information at 1-877-894-4663, or visit the department's web site: [www.dfi.wa.gov/consumers/homeownership/foreclosure\\_help.htm](http://www.dfi.wa.gov/consumers/homeownership/foreclosure_help.htm).

Citizens who have mortgage questions might also check the Washington State Housing Finance Commission's web site: <http://wshfc.org/admin/contact.htm>. You can also call the commission toll-free at 1-800-767-4663.



Businesses are encouraged to look at the Shared Work Program as a strategy for avoiding layoffs. Employers can temporarily reduce work hours of full-time employees by as much as 50 percent – while the workers can still receive partial unemployment benefits to replace some of those lost wages.

The program's web site is [www.esd.wa.gov/uibenefits/faq/shared-work.php](http://www.esd.wa.gov/uibenefits/faq/shared-work.php), and the toll-free telephone number is 1-800-752-2500.

This program can be a good way for businesses to keep their skilled workers until the economy gets back on a firm footing. Right now in our state, about 2,000 businesses and 42,000 employees are participating in the Shared-Work Program.

# 17<sup>th</sup> District News

## A new way to help pay for college

The American Opportunity Tax Credit pays up to \$2,500 per student, per year, for tuition and related expenses. The federal government is offering this temporary tax credit for students or parents to claim on their 2010 income-tax return – which means the credit can help pay tuition in the 2010-2011 college year. Don't miss this opportunity—it may be worth thousands to you. This benefit extends well into the middle class. The full credit is available to households with income up to \$80,000, or \$160,000 for joint filers. There are also partial tax credits available for families above these thresholds.

Even if you don't make enough money to file an income-tax return, you should still apply, because you can receive up to \$1,000 to help pay tuition. Students should talk to their school's financial-aid counselor for more information, and interested citizens can also click [www.irs.gov/newsroom/article/0,,id=205674,00.html](http://www.irs.gov/newsroom/article/0,,id=205674,00.html) to obtain additional details.

As I noted earlier, it was great to win House, Senate, and gubernatorial support in the 2009 session for the Opportunity Internships Program to link high-school students with high-demand careers. I introduced the measure to help students



learn the work ethic by actually working in local businesses, and also to help increase the number of skilled workers available to businesses.

Opportunity Internships help connect students to the working world, showing

young men and women why it's a solid idea to earn a solid education. These internships are also a terrific way to help re-engage at-risk students and to help local industries grow at the same time.

Two other programs assist young citizens (and their parents!) in conquering financial hurdles that lurk between a student and her or his high-quality postsecondary schooling:

Running Start allows high-school juniors and seniors to at-

tend college classes tuition-free – and earn credits both for high school and for college. Students can study on a college campus while acquiring credits that count toward graduating from high school and from college.

Running Start for the Trades allows high-school juniors and seniors to take classes that prepare them to enter a full-time apprenticeship after they graduate. Students can also enter into a two-year program that will lead to an apprenticeship.

For more of the fine points on these two programs, don't hesitate to call 360-725-6508.

## Olympia 2010: Jobs and the economy

On economic matters, you may be interested in checking my opinion column that was included in a recent issue of the Vancouver Business Journal. This is the newspaper's website: [www.vbjusa.com/news/opinion\\_page](http://www.vbjusa.com/news/opinion_page)

When it comes to economic planning, it seems to me that we'd better think short term AND long term.

I'm committed to creating jobs near term and building our high-tech base longer term by growing our local silicon and solar industries.



We have a brief window of opportunity to become an exporter of renewable energy to the rest of the world, and we should seize this opportunity before it fades away.

Recently, I toured the SEH America facilities in Vancouver for a first-hand look at the world's largest silicon-wafer supplier. Silicon wafers represent the foundation for semiconductors and other electronic devices. This is the very economic arena that will lead the computer, telecommunications, and solar-energy industries for decades to come. SEH employs 750 people in Clark County, and the average employee has been on the job there for 14 years.

I worked with other local legislators last session to pass a tax credit aimed at bringing manufacturing jobs in the solar industry to Clark County. So that's one victory, and one more tool in our economic tool belt. An even more ambitious measure passed out of the House unanimously.



# Representative Tim Probst

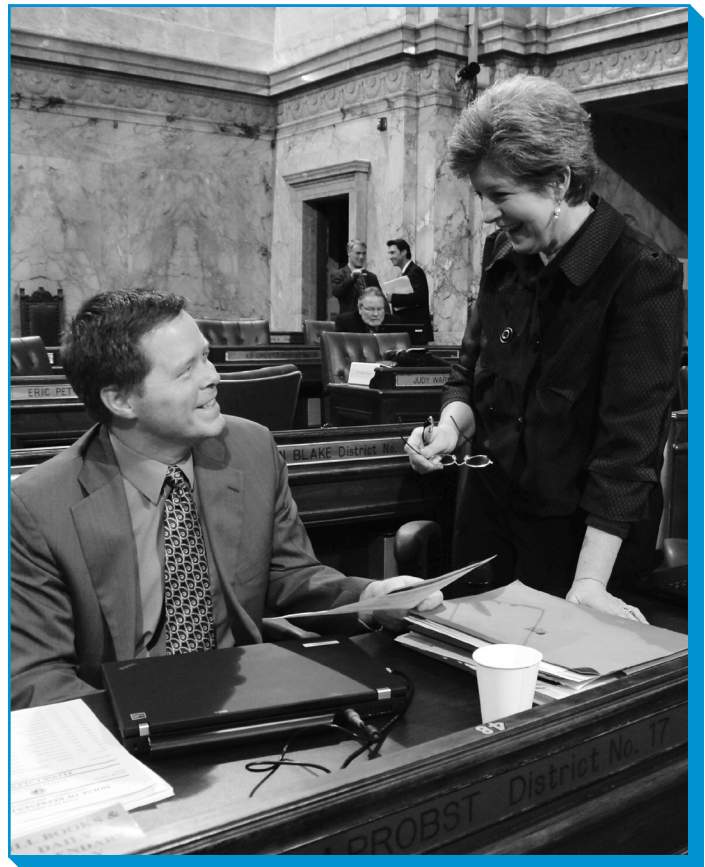
The bill made it to within a hairsbreadth of clearing the Senate and moving to the governor's desk – but died in the last hours of the 2009 legislative session. We'll keep fighting to pass it this year.

Washington needs this strategy so we can get ahead of the curve and position ourselves to become a clean-energy exporter.



Clark County is primed to win these new businesses. We must protect our low electricity costs and continue improving our workforce skills in order to compete with places like Japan, Germany, Malaysia, and, yes, even Oregon.

Together, we can create secure jobs for Washington residents, by building an attractive business climate, and by creating the best educated, most skilled populace in the world. That's a vision worth pursuing!



*Representative Deb Wallace and I frequently work together on issues of concern for our 17th District families, neighborhoods, and businesses of southwestern Washington.*



## TELEPHONE TOWN HALL

**Monday night, March 1, 2010**

I hope that you will join the call, and I look forward to hearing from you.

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**17th District**  
**News**

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